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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF UTAH

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In the matter of the application for  
authorization to search one (1) United  
States Postal Service (USPS) Priority Mail  
Parcel Tracking No.  
**9505516227885014324670**  
more fully described in Attachment A

Case No. 2:25mj38-DAO

APPLICATION IN SUPPORT OF  
APPLICATION FOR SEARCH  
WARRANT

The Honorable Daphne A. Oberg  
United States Magistrate Judge

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**AFFIDAVIT**

I, Solomon Ettinger, being duly sworn, hereby depose and say:

1. Your affiant, USPIS Task Force Officer Solomon Ettinger, is a POST certified and sworn peace officer in the state of Utah, since 2017. I am currently assigned as a Detective with the Utah County Major Crimes Task Force, and a Task Force Officer with the United States Postal Inspection Service. I specialize in narcotics investigations. Along with my POST certification, I successfully completed a Field Training Officer program, and am a member of the SWAT team. I have experience investigating crimes such as Theft, Criminal Mischief, DUI, Fraud, Domestic Violence, and other Utah Criminal Code violations. I have training and experience in the identification of drugs as well as their methods of use and distribution. Your affiant has training and

experience in identifying signs of impairment related to drugs and alcohol. I have experience in search warrants related to suspects using and/or distributing illegal substances and executing them as a member of the Provo Police Department and Utah County Major Crimes Task Force. As a result of my training and experience, I am familiar with methods employed by individuals engaged in various illegal activities, including, production, transportation, distribution, and use of illegal substances.

2. I am currently assigned to investigate a variety of federal violations to include controlled substances being transported via the United States Mails. As part of my duties as a Postal Inspector Task Force Officer, I investigate crimes involving the United States Mail including Title 18, United States Code, Section 1716, Nonmailable Matter, Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), Possession with Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance, 843(b), Unlawful use of a Communication Facility to Facilitate the Distribution of a Controlled Substance, and Title 18 United States Code, Section 1956, Laundering of monetary instruments. The facts and information contained in this affidavit have been obtained by me personally or provided to me by other law enforcement officers and postal employees. Since this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing a search warrant from the court, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause for the search warrant.
3. Based on my training and experience, I am aware that the United States Postal Service mail system is frequently used to transport illicitly used drugs,

including controlled substances, and money associated with drug trafficking and other illicit activities to areas throughout the United States. I also know that many subjects prefer mail/delivery services such as Priority Mail because of the reliability and the ability to track the article's progress to the intended delivery point. The fast delivery time with Priority Mail is a big draw for senders of illicit money and drug parcels to get the items delivered in the least amount of time possible to avoid detection by law enforcement. Priority Mail is usually delivered within 1-3 days, which is a big draw for drug traffickers to get the product in their buyer's hands. USPS processes millions of Priority Mail parcels which is a draw to drug traffickers since their drug parcel will be mixed in with such a high volume of other parcels. When a drug trafficker learns that a mailed article has not arrived as scheduled, he/she often becomes suspicious of any delayed attempt to deliver the item and may decline the parcel in fear that law enforcement is monitoring the delivery.

4. Based on my training and experience regarding the use of Priority Mail for the transportation of controlled substances and illicit proceeds through the U.S. Mail, I know these types of mailings often bear the following characteristics:
  - a. Fictitious names, alternate addresses, or incomplete names and/or addresses in an attempt to conceal their identity from law enforcement, most often by the sender of the parcel.
  - b. Cash payment for shipping to avoid detection by law enforcement.
  - c. Drug traffickers often tape every seam of a parcel in order to mask the smell of illegal drugs.

- d. Parcels from California, particularly near the Mexico border are a well-known source for drug trafficking.
5. Based on my training and experience, I know drug traffickers and their associates will often use fictitious names or incomplete names and/or addresses in an attempt to conceal their identity from law enforcement. Address verifications are conducted, and the return addresses listed on the articles are often either fictitious or sender names are not associated with the address.
6. This affidavit is made in support of an application for a search warrant on one (1) United States Postal Service Priority Mail parcel (SUBJECT PARCEL). The SUBJECT PARCEL is believed to contain illicit money or drugs as part of a drug trafficking scheme. The SUBJECT PARCEL is described as follows:
  - a. A United States Postal Service Priority Mail Parcel Tracking No. **9505516227885014324670**, addressed to Marcos Torres, 7656 W Glenwood Ave, Magna, Utah 84044 bearing a return address of Austin McNally, 8720 Ariva Ct, San Diego, CA 92123, shipped on January 14, 2025, from the San Diego Post Office, California, via the United States Postal Service (USPS) weighing 3 lb, 0.8 oz with a shipment cost of \$19.30.

#### **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION**

7. On January 16, 2025, I was conducting interdiction utilizing USPS business record lists of parcels coming into Salt Lake City at a USPS processing

facility located in Salt Lake City. I found the SUBJECT PARCEL suspicious due to several characteristics consistent with drug trafficking through the mail.

8. I found the SUBJECT PARCEL return address of 8720 Ariva Ct, San Diego, CA 92123 to be suspicious in nature after checking law enforcement and paid databases to be the address of an apartment complex. The address bears no apartment numbers and is only a general address of a large building full of many units. While searching USPS parcel business records, most mailings to and from the building include apartment numbers. There are also no historical parcel mailings to or from the sender's name, Austin McNally, located at that address. I searched a paid database, Clear, for anyone with the name of Austin McNally residing in the zip code of 92123 and there are zero results. I searched for anyone with the name of Austin McNally in the entire State of California, and there are none. From my training, I believe that the name "Austin McNally" is likely a false name used to conceal the true sender's identity and thwart law enforcement investigations as is common with parcels involved in narcotics trafficking. From my training, I believe the use of a general apartment building that excludes an apartment number as a return address is intentional and also used to conceal the sender's true identity in order to thwart law enforcement follow up or investigations on suspicious packages.

9. I noted in further research of USPS business records that the recipient address of 7656 W Glenwood Ave, Magna, Utah 84044 has received two other paid in cash parcels, one arriving in November 2024 and one in September 2024 – one weighing 1.1 lbs, and one 4.4 lbs, respectively. Both of these parcels were

sent from Temecula, CA, which is situated between Los Angeles and San Diego. These packages are similar to the SUBJECT PARCEL in that they were both sent with cash from retail locations from Southern California. There are not historical pictures available of these packages and no available sender information.

10. I found in USPS business records the SUBJECT PARCEL was paid in cash at the retail counter of the San Diego, California Post Office. Cash payments are often used to pay for shipping by drug traffickers since credit and debit cards can often be traced by law enforcement.
11. I found the SUBJECT PARCEL was taped at every seam which is a technique used by drug traffickers to evade drug detection by trained K-9 Officers.
12. I found the SUBJECT PARCEL was mailed from San Diego, CA which is a city near the border of Mexico. I know that many drugs coming into the United States are sourced from Mexico, and border cities are major areas for distribution of illicit narcotics throughout the United States.
13. On January 16, 2025, I met with Provo Police Department K-9 Officer Smith near 500 W 2100 S, Lehi, UT to conduct a drug detection sniff of the SUBJECT PARCEL. I placed four boxes which gave the appearance of being parcels on the ground in a line along with the SUBJECT PARCEL. I did not inform K-9 Officer Smith which parcel was believed to contain illegal drugs. K-9 Officer Smith conducted a drug detection sniff of the SUBJECT PARCEL and the other parcels with his K-9 Bro. K-9 Officer Smith reported that K-9 Bro showed a positive alert on the SUBJECT PARCEL and also an indication to the presence of the odor of illegal narcotics.

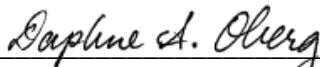
14. K-9 Officer Smith is a certified Peace Officer in the State of Utah and recertified through POST with K-9 Bro in April 2024. K-9 Bro is certified in detecting the presence of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, MDMA and mushrooms.
15. Based on the aforementioned facts, your Affiant believes there is probable cause that the SUBJECT PARCEL described in Paragraph No. 6a contains controlled substances and/or proceeds from the trafficking of controlled substances, or other illegal activities that involve the movement of drugs or currency that would have the smell of drugs, constituting evidence of violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1716, Nonmailable Matter, Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), Possession with Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance, 843(b), Unlawful use of a Communication Facility to Facilitate the Distribution of a Controlled Substance.



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Solomon G. Ettinger  
USPIS Task Force Officer

The affiant appeared before me by video conference on this date pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 and affirmed under oath the content of this affidavit and application on this 17th day of January 2025.



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The Honorable Daphne A. Oberg  
United States Magistrate Judge  
District of Utah

### Attachment A

One (1) Priority Mail parcel tracking number 9505516227885014324670 described as a white medium flat rate box, measuring approximately 11.25"x8.75"x6" addressed to Marcos Torres, 7656 W Glenwood Ave, Magna, Utah 84044 bearing a return address of Austin McNally, 8720 Ariva Ct, San Diego, CA 92123.

The parcel is being held at the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) Salt Lake City, Utah Domicile, and has been held at the USPIS Salt Lake City, Utah Domicile since January 16, 2025.

*Parcel image:*

